

# The Church Guardian.

"Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."—Eph. vi. 24.  
"Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."—Jude: 3.

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THURSDAY, JANUARY 29, 1880.

One Dollar a Year.

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EDITORS.

VISCOUNT STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE, the oldest member of the House of Lords and of the Privy Council, completed his 92nd year recently.

The London Standard says the number of lieutenants in the Royal Navy is to be gradually raised to 1,000, being 400 more than provided for by the retirement scheme of 1870. This step has become necessary on account of the serious stagnation in promotion which has for a long time existed on the sub-lieutenants' list.

The Church Gazette of Auckland, New Zealand, of date December 1st. 1879, contains an account of the ninth synod (second session), convened on October 27, of that diocese. The bishop in his address stated that since the last meeting the clergy of the diocese had increased from 31, including 5 Maoris, to 50, including 12 Maoris. He gave an encouraging report of Church work. Many of the churches had been enlarged or improved, and in some parishes new buildings were needed to receive the overflowing congregations of worshippers.

A Hindoo almanac has been published in Bombay under the patronage of Mr. Bulwantrao Vanayak Shastri. It is printed in Sanskrit, Marhatti, and English, and is of great local service, because the Hindoo needs an almanac more than any other human being, since (to quote from the almanac itself) "in his public and private accounts, and in his usual daily occupations, he keeps to civil reckoning of time. In his religious ceremonies he must keep his attention to astronomical aspects, and in his festivities and other occupations to the astrological aspects of the planets."

The Bishop of Chester has appointed the Rev. W. E. B. Gunn vicar of St. John's, Egremont, near Birkenhead. Mr. Gunn was, until about three years ago, minister of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church (Established), Liverpool. He had then a stipend of 800l. a year, but left the Presbyterians and was ordained at Chester in 1878. He has since been curate at Northenden in that diocese. St. John's, Egremont, is a large church, but has only 19l. a year endowment and no house.

The Bishop of Durham says that having finished his round of confirmations for the year, he ventures to think it would not be uninteresting to the clergy to hear the results. "With the aid of the Bishop of Dover, I have been enabled to hold forty-one confirmations in the diocese this autumn, almost entirely in the county of Durham. The whole number of candidates confirmed was 3,376 males and 4,907 females, making a total of 8,283. . . . the total for the year exceeding by more than 2,500 the total of any preceding year, while the excess over the average is very far greater. Other facts considered, the increase is of the highest significance. If this large increase of numbers had been purchased by any lowering of the requirements or any laxity of any kind of the clergy, it would have afforded no matter for congratulation; but so far as I have been able to learn the preparation has been, if anything, more careful than hitherto, and the standard of previous years has been more than maintained, and in some cases the after results have been most striking. The value of confirmation is very far from ending with its influence on the young persons themselves. It is a rare opportunity of moving parents through their interest in their children to a deeper sense of their Christian privileges and obligations, and thus it may be made the turning-point in the religious life of whole families in a parish. Hence no part of a clergyman's work deserves more attention, for none yields a richer or more immediate harvest, and the importance of systematic efforts to sustain and deepen the effects of confirmation is obvious."

THE wedding of the Bishop of Manchester and Miss Duncan, of Bath, was solemnised in London on Thursday week.

On the last day of the year two Englishmen staying at Daves made the ascent of the Schwarzhorn. They found the summit free from snow; the sun was unclouded, and the air warm and genial.

FATHER CURCI, who is living in retirement at Naples, has written a Preface to a new Italian translation of the New Testament, in which he deprecates that the Scriptures are so little read by Italian Roman Catholics.

PROFESSOR NORDENSKIÖLD found in the Arctic regions, it is stated, a new remedy against scurvy—a little berry, hitherto unrecognised, produced by a plant which finds an ephemeral existence in the snow and ice during the short Arctic summer.

In the midnight of January 5th, a high wall of ice, 1,500 yards long, formed at the junction of the Loire and Indre, forced the rapid current of the former river out of its bed. Five houses near Chinon were swept away, and the Prefect caused others to be evacuated, as not safe to inhabit.

THE King of Italy has conferred upon Mr. Samuel Smiles the rank of Chevalier of SS. Maurice and Lazaro, as a token of his Majesty's appreciation of that gentleman's works. Fifty thousand copies of *Self-Help* have been sold in Italy, and it has also been condensed into a little volume—sold at the book-stalls along the streets for 15 centesimi—under the title of *Ajutati che Dio Pajuta*.

GERMAN statisticians have recently published an estimate of the total amount of capital invested in the construction of railroads since Stephenson's experimental locomotive first glided over a double rail, revolutionizing the transport system of our earth. The result of their calculations is the amazing sum of seventy-five milliards of francs, or \$15,000,000,000.

PROF. COLLADON, of Geneva, is reported to have effected an important improvement in the ingenious contrivance for enabling deaf mutes to hear through the teeth, lately discovered in the United States. For the Indian rubber apparatus used by the American inventor, which is somewhat costly, the Professor substitutes a piece of elastic cardboard. By this, it is said, deaf mutes are enabled to hear voices and distinguish the notes of a piano.

ANOTHER "REFORMED" COMES BACK TO THE CHURCH.—The Church Record, the organ of the "Reformed Church of England," announces that the "Rev. Philip Norton, late 'Missionary Chaplain' for the American branch of the R. E. C., was ordained a deacon by the Bishop of Worcester on the 21st ult., and is now assistant-curate of St. Paul's, Blackheath, a remote parish in 'the Black Country.'"

## FLATTERING STATISTICS.

The Rev. Dr. J. M. Hopkins, in the New York Churchman, after comparing the Church's statistics with those of the Presbyterian body, much to the advantage of the former, speaks in this way of the Church's present and future prospects:—The figures from 1868 to 1877, inclusive, give us a ten years' increase of 60 per cent.; the figures from 1869 to 1878, inclusive, give us a ten years' increase of 55 per cent.; the figures from 1870 to 1879, inclusive, give us a ten years' increase of 77 per cent. Or, taking an average of the three, we have an increase of sixty-four per cent. in ten years, or nearly twice as fast as the general growth of the country. If the present rates of advance are maintained for a little more than twenty years, we shall then be equal in numbers with our Presbyterian friends, if not a little ahead.

## OUR ENGLISH LETTER.

COLCHESTER, ENG., Jan. 7th. 1880.

A Happy New Year to the readers of the GUARDIAN, and its editors as well. The latter part of 1879 brought to us here some very cold days, and the Christmas season was observed with skating, to the great delight of the young people. At every corner I met excited young men and maidens, hurrying away to the ponds and meadows, all armed with skates; for ice which would be condemned as too poor for use in Nova Scotia, will attract a large crowd in England.

The New Year, however, has been ushered in mildly; and now the useless skates are laid away to rust, probably for months. This being a very orderly town, Christmas was observed in a quiet manner. The usual services were held in the various Churches, most of which were well attended. I have been in several of them, and think they are not so tastefully decorated as our Canadian Churches would be, had we holly and box as well as spruce, for wreaths.

Last week I visited Cambridge and Ely. As the students are home for the holidays, the former place was very quiet. The colleges are left open, however, and visitors always admitted. One soon tires of seeing many of them. I thought them very much alike. Each college has so many stained (with age and dampness) stone buildings, many half-covered with lovely green ivy; so many spacious quadrangles, with the soft English grass in the centre; so many lofty dining-halls, the walls of which are adorned with dingy pictures of past celebrities, who must look grimly down and spoil one's appetite; and so many gorgeous chapels with oriel windows.

Richly light,  
Shedding a dim religious light.

Another thing they shed is a great deal of damp chilliness, which makes one reflect that our ancestors could not have had much knowledge of rheumatism.

From Cambridge to Ely is fifteen miles drive by rail. The track is over the fens, the counter-part of the N. S. and N. B. marshes. Bowling smoothly along, it was very easy to imagine I was gliding over the great marsh between Amherst and Sackville. There are the long stretches of gray flat land, and the wide ditches. But Ely Cathedral—that is, not Nova Scotia. It is "beautiful as a dream." It is useless to attempt to describe it—one must see this glorious old pile to judge of its grandeur. I was fortunate enough to hear the Bishop preach at morning service, and an excellent discourse he gave. He is a fine-looking, gray-haired, old gentleman, with that fresh complexion one sees so often in England. His voice was most sonorous, and rang like music through the arches of the Cathedral, as he told of the prayer and praise that should begin the New Year.

ARTUA.

## Foreign Missions.

### INDIA.

MAHOMET AND HIS RELIGION:—No. 11.

In writing of the religion of the Moslems, their Koran or inspired book first claims our attention. It is made up of those revelations which Mahomet professed from time to time to have received direct from God, which he repeated to those about him and of which, according to strict Mahomedan doctrine every word is of Divine command. When made known, the different chapters were by his followers committed to memory, or written down on palm-leaves, white stones, pieces of leather, shoulder blades of the sheep and camel and these in later years, were put into a chest in the prophet's house. After Mahomet's death a complete copy of all the Suras or chapters were made by his secretary so

that there are ample grounds for believing that the present existing Koran consists of the genuine words of the prophet" (Sir W. Muir.) Written at different periods of his life, the sentiments change and vary with the gradual development of his system. In the earlier chapters we find him seeking direction from God thus "Praise be to God, the Lord of all creatures; the most merciful, the King of the day of Judgment. Thou do we worship, direct us in the right way." (Koran Suras xv. 87.) In the latter chapters the Doctrine of Fate is taught, and also the Unity of the Godhead. Plurality of wives is allowed and sensuous pictures of Heaven and Hell are introduced. "The just shall drink of cup of wine mixed with the waters of Cafur, and shall be rewarded with a garden and silk garments, therein shall be fruits and palm-trees and agreeable and beautiful damsels, having fine black eyes" [Sura xv.] The general judgment is said to be announced by the trumpet of the angel "Israfil" when the earth shall shine by the light of the Lord and the book shall be laid open and every soul shall be fully rewarded." This is the Faith. Practical religion consists of five observances. 1. Recital of Belief. 2. Prayer which Mahomet calls the pillar of religion. 3. Fasting. 4. Almsgiving. 5. Pilgrimage to Mecca. We will now turn to Archbishop Trench's analysis of this system.

The name which the Mahomedans give to their faith is *Islam*, a word signifying the yielding of oneself to God. Here, as so often we have in the name that which lies deepest and nearest to the heart of the thing. The central idea of this religion in its noblest aspect is just the surrendering of oneself to God; but then it is the surrendering of oneself to Him as absolute power, not as holy love. We behold it here at once in its strength and its weakness; in its strength inasmuch as it does preach this yielding of self to God; in its weakness, in that this surrender is but the surrender of the weak to the strong. Power belongeth unto God—this truth the Mussulman had grasped with all the energies of his heart and soul; but he had missed the truth which ought ever to go along with it, that this absolute power is wielded by perfect love. Man is for him God's servant not son. A mighty gulf divides them and shall divide them for ever. The very title Son of God is blasphemy in his ears.

"But Mahomedanism is not merely this falling back from the blessed truths of the Gospel, it is a still further retrogression in the spiritual history of mankind. It falls short, not merely of Christianity but also of Jewish truth. It is a Judaism stripped of its prophecy and its promise, reduced to a religion of nature, without a priesthood, without a sacrifice even as it is without any deep consciousness of sin, without a Messiah. It has no ideal of holiness, and indeed how should it, when the man who stands at its centre, not without noble qualities, is yet so full of blots and blood-stains? You read the whole Koran through without coming on words which in the least resemble these "make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Purge me with Hysop and I shall be clean; wash me and I shall be whiter than snow."

"Or turn to it in its social working, as it has approved itself during the twelve centuries during which it has been upon its trial. It has all the faults, all the narrowness of a local religion, which by strange unexpected successes has outgrown the region of its birth, and has obtained a dominion not limited but universal.

The despotisms of the East are not the accidents, but the legitimate outgrowths of the Koran, and so long as this exists as the authoritative book, they too must exist with it. Then again, as has been truly observed, in the very act out of slightly alleviating, the Koran has recognized and perpetuated, the two fatal

social evils of the East, polygamy and slavery" (iv. *Lectura Islam.*)

The lecture closes with the following remarkable words. "Not merely things which are made up of both a mingled wool of light and darkness, they all serve God, and shall be shown at last to have done their part for the working out of His purpose in the world; even as in Eastern Legend other spirits beside the good were compelled by Solomon to take their share and do drudging work in the rearing of the temple of God."

## THE CONVERT'S FIRST CHRISTMAS.

As different as Heaven from earth!" fervently exclaimed a young convert when he contrasted his first Christmas Day with days spent when he was a Mohammedan. He had been a bigoted and bitter opponent of our faith; now, a humble believer, he had partaken, for the first time, of the memorials of a dying Saviour. He was one of a large band of native Christians who kept a holiday at Batala, in the Punjab.

A peculiar interest in keeping Yule at Batala arose from the fact that it was only the second time that any Christians had been there at the holy season. They now flocked from various quarters to the Rev. E. H. Baring's school for native Christian boys, as to a centre of attraction, that school being established in a palace of the former Maharajah Shere Singh, near Batala. Thither came the teacher's *bibi* (lady) from the mud-built village in which she is the only Christian woman; the converted Faqir wrapt in his blanket, the tradesmen from his shop, the *munshi*, the schoolmaster, the youth in Government employ; men, women, bright-eyed brown babies came, some from the distance of twenty or thirty miles, to have a holy and happy Christmas together. To at least nine of the adults present it was the first one which they ever had known. Some came unexpectedly, though sure of a welcome.

About sixty Christians assembled in the chapel. The walls of the once Mohammedan palace rang with "Hark! the herald angels sing," heartily sung in Urdu. The latter part of the day was spent in innocent mirth. There were foot-races between Christian, Mohammedan, and Hindu lads, boys from Mission schools in Batala and neighbouring villages joining in Christmas amusements, though strangers to deeper Christmas joy.

The feast was spread on the floor of the large school-room, tables and chairs being needless luxuries. More than sixty, including children, sat down to the meal in pleasant fellowship, as the early Christians might have done. These are the early Christians of the Punjab, some of whom have known well what it is to be "persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." There are converted Brahmins sharing the feast with the lad of the despised Militar class; the "twice-born" have given up the proud privileges of their caste. The whilom Mohammedan is chatting merrily with the former Hindu. There is no formality or gloom; Christmas sunshine is over the little flock gathered out of heathen darkness.

Is there no joy to the missionary in such a meeting as this? Is it not worth some effort and self-denial to see day dawning over a vast nation?

Perhaps some one who has hitherto contented himself with reading missionary reports, and subscribing to missionary funds, will pause and ask himself the question, "Is not Christ now calling me—even me—to go forth and lay my grasp on the sickle? May it not be that the Christmas of 1880 will be my first Christmas in India?"

A. L. O. E.

In 1869 there were 620 Churches in London and suburbs. In 1879 they had increased over 40 per cent., and numbered 872.